

VILLAGE BRIDGE
(Big Eddy Bridge)
National Covered Bridges Recording Project
Spanning Mad River on Bridge Street
Waitsfield
Washington County
Vermont

HAER VT-34
VT-34

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

ADDENDUM TO:
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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

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ADDENDUM TO VILLAGE BRIDGE (Big Eddy Bridge)

HAER No. VT-34

LOCATION: Spanning Mad River at Bridge Street, Waitsfield, Washington County,
Vermont

UTM: 18.673937.4895212, Waitsfield, Vermont, Quadrangle

STRUCTURAL
TYPE:

Burr through truss covered bridge

DATE OF

CONSTRUCTION: 1833; sidewalk 1840; rehabilitated 1973

DESIGNER/

BUILDER: Unknown

PRESENT OWNER: Town of Waitsfield, Vermont

PREVIOUS USE: Vehicular bridge

PRESENT USE: Vehicular bridge

SIGNIFICANCE: Built in 1833, Village Bridge is the oldest extant covered bridge in Vermont and a rare survivor of the early craftsman tradition of wooden truss bridge construction. It is also of interest for its location in a well-preserved village center.

HISTORIAN: Researched and written by Lola Bennett, November 2005.

PROJECT

INFORMATION: The National Covered Bridges Recording Project is part of the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), a long-range program to document historically significant engineering and industrial works in the United States. HAER is administered by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, a division of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Federal Highway Administration funded the project.

Chronology

- 1777 Vermont declares itself an independent republic.
- 1782 Town of Waitsfield chartered.
- 1791 Vermont becomes the fourteenth state admitted to the Union; Waitsfield has a population of sixty-one.
- 1793 Grist mill established near this site.
- c1796 First bridge built at this site.
- 1805 America's first covered bridge built at Philadelphia.
- 1806 Flood destroys first bridge at this site.
Theodore Burr patents the Burr truss.
- 1810 Washington County established.
- 1824 Flood destroys second bridge at this site.
Vermont's first covered bridge built at Highgate Falls.
- 1830 Flood destroys third bridge at this site.
- 1833 Village Bridge constructed.
- 1940 Sidewalk added.
- 1973 Milton Graton repairs Village Bridge.
- 1974 Village Bridge listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- 1989 Deck replaced.
- 1992 Truss repaired.
- 2001 Arch repaired.
- 2003 Village Bridge recorded by the Historic American Engineering Record.

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